

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claims 1-40, all of the claims in the verified translation of PCT/DE2003/003473. Please also cancel claims 1-12 and 20-39 presented by KBA under Article 19 on August 27, 2004. Further, please cancel claims 1-35 submitted by KBA under Article 34 on November 17, 2004. Please add new claims 41-102 as follows.

Claims 1-40 (Cancelled)

41. (New) A printing press comprising:

at least a first printing unit including at least two cylinders defining a printing gap having an inlet area and an outlet area, said at least first printing unit being adapted for imprinter operation wherein in a first operational situation a web is imprinted in said printing gap and in a second operational situation the web is conducted without contact with said at least two cylinders in said printing gap;

a first guide element in said inlet area and a second guide element in said outlet area;

a wall of said at least second guide element, said wall including an outer surface having a surface area defining said guide element; and

a plurality of outward-directed micro-openings in said wall, each of said micro-openings having a diameter no greater than 500  $\mu\text{m}$ , a density of said micro-openings per unit of said surface area being at least  $0.2/\text{mm}^2$ , said plurality of micro-openings being adapted for the exit of a fluid under pressure.

42. (New) A printing press comprising:

at least a first printing unit including at least two cylinders defining a printing gap having an inlet area and an outlet area, said at least first printing unit being adapted for imprinter operation wherein in a first operational situation a web is imprinted in said printing gap and in a second operation situation the web is conducted without contact with said at least two cylinders in said printing gap;

a first guide element in said inlet area and a second guide element in said outlet area; and

a load bearing, at least partially fluid-permeable support forming said at least second guide element, said support having an outer layer constituted as a micro-porous, air-permeable material having a plurality of micro-openings in at least an outlet area of said second guide element adapted to be contacted by the web, said second guide element being formed as a rod around which air flows.

43. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein each said guide element has a circular profile.

44. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein each said guide element has a circular profile.

45. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein each said guide element has a half-shell cross-sectional profile.

46. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein each said guide element has a half-shell cross-sectional profile.
47. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein each said guide element has a web-facing side having a cross-sectional profile in the shape of a segment of a circle.
48. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein each said guide element has a web-facing side having a cross-sectional profile in the shape of a segment of a circle.
49. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said outer layer has a plurality of micro-openings adapted for the exit of fluid under pressure, each said micro-opening having a diameter of no greater than 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .
50. (New) The printing press of claim 49 wherein said micro-openings are open pores of a porous material.
51. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said pores have a mean diameter of 5 to 50  $\mu\text{m}$ .
52. (New) The printing press of claim 50 wherein said pores have a mean diameter of 5 to 50  $\mu\text{m}$ .
53. (New) The printing press of claim 51 wherein said mean diameter is between 10 and 30  $\mu\text{m}$ .

54. (New) The printing press of claim 52 wherein said mean diameter is between 10 and 30  $\mu\text{m}$ .

55. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said micro-porous material is an open-pored sinter material.

56. (New) The printing press of claim 50 wherein said micro-porous material is an open-pored sinter material.

57. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said support has a support face supporting said outer layer and a plurality of openings adapted to provide fluid to said outer layer.

58. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said outer layer has a thickness of less than 1 mm.

59. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said support has a plurality of unconnected passages underlying said outer layer.

60. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said support is a support tube with a hollow profile.

61. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein a wall of said support carries said

outer layer and has a profile with a curvature adapted to a path of travel of the web.

62. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein a wall of said support carries said outer layer and has a curved wall with a profile in the shape of a segment of a circle.

63. (New) The printing unit of claim 42 wherein said support includes a wall having a thickness greater than 3 mm.

64. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said micro-openings constitute between 3% and 30% of said outlet area.

65. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein said diameter of said openings is not greater than 300  $\mu\text{m}$ .

66. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein said wall has a thickness of between 0.2 mm and 3.0 mm.

67. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein said micro-openings are adapted to discharge between 1 and 20 cubic meters of fluid per hour for each square meter of said surface.

68. (New) The printing press of claim 49 wherein said micro-openings are adapted to discharge between 1 and 20 cubic meters of fluid per hour for each square meter of

said surface.

69. (New) The printing press of claim 67 wherein said fluid discharge rate is between 2 and 15 cubic meters of fluid per hour for each square meter of said surface.

70. (New) The printing press of claim 68 wherein said fluid discharge rate is between 2 and 15 cubic meters of fluid per hour for each square meter of said surface.

71. (New) The printing press of claim 42 wherein said micro-porous material is charged with fluid at at least 1 bar of excess pressure.

72. (New) The printing press of claim 50 wherein said micro-porous material is charged with fluid at at least 1 bar of excess pressure.

73. (New) The printing press of claim 71 wherein said fluid has a pressure of at least 4 bar.

74. (New) The printing press of claim 72 wherein said fluid has a pressure of at least 4 bar.

75. (New) The printing press of claim 41 further including a feed line adapted to feed fluid to said at least second guide element, said feed line having an interior diameter of less than 100 mm.

76. (New) The printing press of claim 49 further including a feed line adapted to feed fluid to said at least second guide element, said feed line having an interior diameter of less than 100 mm.

77. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein each said guide element has an exterior diameter of between 60 and 100 mm.

78. (New) The printing press of claim 49 wherein each said guide element has an exterior diameter of between 60 and 100 mm.

79. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein each said guide element has a length greater than 1,200 mm.

80. (New) The printing press of claim 49 wherein each said guide element has a length greater than 1,200 mm.

81. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein said fluid under pressure is air.

82. (New) The printing press of claim 49 wherein said fluid under pressure is air.

83. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein a portion of said at least second guide element is a releasable insert on a support defined by said wall.

84. (New) The printing press of claim 83 wherein said wall has a profile which is matched to a path of travel of the web.
85. (New) The printing press of claim 83 wherein said wall has a profile in the shape of a segment of a wall.
86. (New) The printing press of claim 47 wherein said segment of a circle extends over an angle of between  $10^{\circ}$  and  $45^{\circ}$ .
87. (New) The printing press of claim 48 wherein said segment of a circle extends over an angle of between  $10^{\circ}$  and  $45^{\circ}$ .
88. (New) The printing press of claim 62 wherein said segment of a circle extends over an angle of between  $10^{\circ}$  and  $45^{\circ}$ .
89. (New) The printing press of claim 85 wherein said segment of a circle extends over an angle of between  $10^{\circ}$  and  $45^{\circ}$ .
90. (New) The printing press of claim 47 wherein a width of said at least second guide element is between 30 and 150 mm.
91. (New) The printing press of claim 48 wherein a width of said at least second guide element is between 30 and 150 mm.



92. (New) The printing press of claim 62 wherein a width of said at least second guide element is between 30 and 150 mm.

93. (New) The printing press of claim 85 wherein a width of said at least second guide element is between 30 and 150 mm.

94. (New) The printing press of claim 41 further including a second printing unit, one of said first and second printing units being adapted to print the web in a first mode of operation of the printing press while the web is conducted without contact through the other of said first and second printing units, and further where, in a second mode of operation, said one printing unit is disengaged from the web and the other of said first and second printing units is in contact with the web.

95. (New) The printing press of claim 42 further including a second printing unit, one of said first and second printing units being adapted to print the web in a first mode of operation of the printing press while the web is conducted without contact through the other of said first and second printing units, and further where, in a second mode of operation, said one printing unit is disengaged from the web and the other of said first and second printing units is in contact with the web.

96. (New) The printing press of claim 41 further including five printing units through which the web is conducted.

97. (New) The printing press of claim 42 further including five printing units through which the web is conducted.

98. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein said micro-openings are made by accelerated particles.

99. (New) The printing press of claim 41 wherein said micro-openings are made by electron beams.

100. (New) The printing press of claim 41 further including a dirt and ink repelling coating on at least said surface area of said at least second guide element.

101. (New) The printing press of claim 100 wherein said coating is chromium.

102. (New) The printing press of claim 101 wherein said surface area is polished to a high gloss.